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Poll Shows Pro-Impeachment Majority Could Grow Even Larger

Results of a new nation-wide survey

To: Interested parties**From:** Jeremy Rosner and Brina Malachowski, GQR

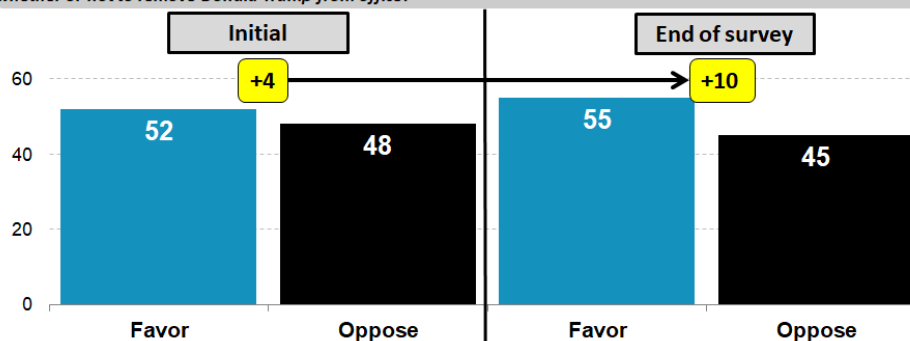
A new GQR nationwide survey,¹ sponsored by Stand Up America and Need to Impeach, shows that a majority of voters already support Congress's newly-launched impeachment process, and that support may expand further. Voters' impressions of the scandal, which are already strongly negative, only grow more critical as they learn more about the facts. The survey suggests that the new Ukraine scandal has fundamentally different dynamics than the earlier debates over the Mueller Report and the 2016 election, and is likely to pose a much bigger threat to Donald Trump and his administration.

The survey shows a majority of the public already supports the House's recently-launched impeachment proceedings. A 4-point, 52-48% majority agrees with Congress beginning "impeachment proceedings to decide whether or not to remove Donald Trump from office." Support is even stronger among self-identified Independents, 55-45%.

This majority expands further after respondents hear facts about the scandal and arguments both favoring and criticizing Trump. The initial 4-point margin in favor of the impeachment proceedings increases to a 10-point margin by the end of the survey, 55-45%. The shift toward support of the impeachment process is even bigger among white non-college-educated women (a shift in the margin of support for impeachment of +16 points, relative to the overall shift of +6 points), among voters under 40 (+10 points), and among Independents (+8 points).

Majority support grows during survey

As you may know, the first step toward removing a US president from office is impeachment proceedings, meaning investigations and hearings. Do you believe Congress should or should not begin impeachment proceedings to decide whether or not to remove Donald Trump from office?

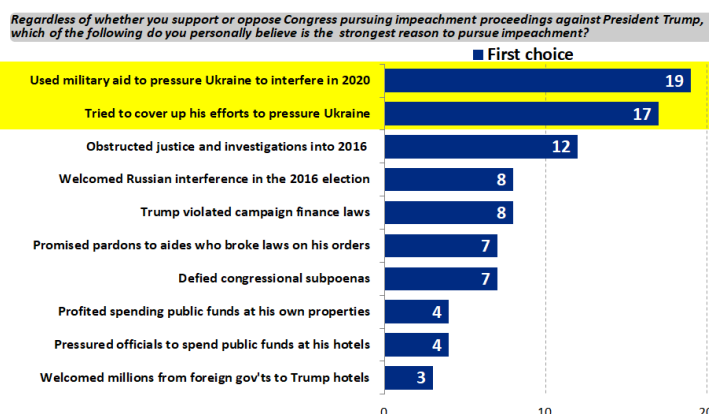


¹ This note is based on results from an online survey with 1,200 registered voters, designed and conducted by GQR from September 30-October 3, 2019. The survey was sponsored by Stand Up America and Need to Impeach. The findings also draw on earlier research sponsored by both groups in June 2019, including an online survey of 1,700 registered voters and 4 focus groups with voters in Las Vegas, NV and Harrisburg, PA.

The existence of majority support for the impeachment process is just one of many key indicators that show this scandal is very different than the earlier debates over the Mueller report and Russian interference in the 2016 election:

- In our June 2019 survey, after release of the Mueller report, when asked what was in the report (“In your own words, what does Robert Mueller's report into Russian election interference say?”), a 31-27% plurality of respondents gave responses that were *favorable* to Trump. By contrast, by a strong, 46-19% margin, more voters now provide open-ended descriptions of the Ukraine scandal that are *critical* of Trump, rather than favorable.
- Public concern over the new Ukraine scandal is also much stronger than over the Mueller report and the evidence of Russian interference in the 2016 election. In June, only 9% of registered voters said that “the issues covered in the Mueller report” was one of their top three national concerns, placing it 12th in a list of 13 issues. Now, however, “presidential abuse of power” ranks 5th out of a list of 12 concerns, picked by 28% as one of their top three national concerns.
- Voters view the Ukraine events as providing much stronger reasons to support impeachment than the Mueller reports and evidence of Russian interference in the 2016 elections. The top two reasons voters cite for potentially supporting impeachment both focus on the Ukraine scandal. Arguments linked to the 2016 election rank well behind.

Ukraine dominates reasons to pursue impeachment

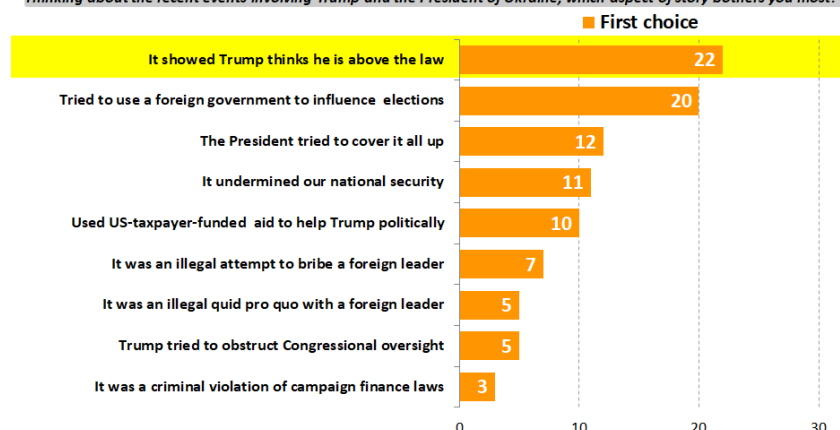


The new research suggests there are four major elements of the new Ukraine scandal that particularly concern voters.

First, voters believe that the Ukraine scandal shows that Trump thinks he is above the law. Voters say this is the aspect of the Ukraine events that concern them most, picked by 22% from a list of nine aspects of the story. As one respondent (a 48-year-old White woman in the Deep South, who is an Independent) says: “The demeanor of Trump makes my stomach churn and his attitude that he is above the law.” This perception creates a powerful predicate for an argument that the impeachment process is warranted because “nobody is above the law” – precisely the argument House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Intelligence Committee Chair Adam Schiff made on October 8, in criticizing the refusal of the White House to cooperate with Congress’s impeachment proceedings.

Top Ukraine concern: “Trump thinks he is above the law”

Thinking about the recent events involving Trump and the President of Ukraine, which aspect of story bothers you most?



Second, voters are concerned by the idea that Trump’s interactions with Ukraine were aimed at getting a foreign country to interfere in America’s own elections. This is the core of what voters say is the strongest argument for impeachment (““Trump used military aid to pressure Ukraine to interfere in the US 2020 election on his behalf”). And it emerges as the second strongest item that concerns voters most about the Ukraine story (“Trump tried to use a foreign government to influence our elections,” selected by 20% from a list of eight options). Our earlier research suggests the public is particularly troubled by the idea of foreign interference in US elections.

Third, voters respond strongly to the idea that Trump and his team used US aid to pressure Ukraine to interfere in America’s 2020 elections. In the survey, the strongest message frames say that Trump “used military aid to pressure Ukraine to interfere in the US election.” Out of a list of six facts about the Ukraine scandal, the one that raises the most concern centers on this idea (“One week before asking the Ukrainian president to investigate Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden, Trump froze \$400 million in foreign and military aid for Ukraine that had already been approved by Reps and Democrats in Congress, as a way to pressure the Ukrainians to help him”; this leads 63% to have serious concerns about Trump, including 43% who have *very serious* concerns. In open-ended responses, voters themselves describe what happened in terms of “pressure” far more than “quid pro quo,” a term that may not be familiar to many voters.

Fourth, voters are bothered by evidence that Trump and his team tried to cover up what happened. Out of a list of 11 messages, the single strongest focuses on the cover up (“Trump and his aides engaged in a cover-up to hide his illegal conversations with the Ukrainian president. As the White House now admits, it locked down all copies of that conversation in a highly restricted intelligence file meant for top national security matters, even though it contained no classified information, and they tried to illegally block a whistleblower from alerting Congress”). This leads 59% to have serious concerns about Trump, including 44% with *very serious* concerns. As the graph above shows, Trump’s cover-up actions are the third strongest source of concern about the scandal.